

NIAMS POLICY ON THE ACCEPTANCE FOR REVIEW OF UNSOLICITED APPLICATIONS THAT REQUEST \$500,000 OR MORE IN DIRECT COSTS

RELEASE DATE: October 31, 2003

NOTICE: NOT-AR-03-004

National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS)
(<http://www.niams.nih.gov/>)

The National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS) is updating its policy on the acceptance of unsolicited applications requesting direct costs of \$500,000 or more for any one year.

o Effective November 2, 2003, the NIAMS will consider accepting such applications only for the June 1/July 1 (Cycle II) and October 1/November 1 (Cycle III) receipt dates. A potential applicant must seek NIAMS acceptance of such an application no later than March 1, for a June 1/July 1 submission, and no later than July 1, for an October 1/November 1 submission.

o This policy applies to new applications, revisions of applications previously accepted for review but not funded, and applications for competing continuation of funded projects. It also applies to supplemental applications that would increase the direct cost to over \$500,000 per year.

o Revised or competing continuation applications that have previously been reviewed by NIAMS Special Emphasis Panels must be received by the earlier date for each cycle, i.e., June 1 or October 1.

o This policy does not apply to applications submitted in response to Requests for Applications (RFAs) or Program Announcements that include specific receipt dates and/or acceptance procedures.

o Acceptance will not be carried over from one round to another. That is, if an applicant is delayed and cannot meet the planned receipt date, a new request will be required for the next receipt date.

BACKGROUND

Current NIH-wide policy requires only that applicants seek agreement from Institute/Center staff at least 6 weeks prior to the anticipated submission of any application requesting \$500,000 or more in direct costs for any year (see Notice NOT-OD-02-004, NIH Guide for Grants and Contracts, October 16, 2001, at <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-02-004.html>).

The same Guide announcement made clear that the policy applies to "... a group of applications, such as those for clinical trial networks, meeting the threshold in the aggregate even if no single application in the group requests that much." With this notice, the NIAMS imposes further restrictions on the acceptance of such applications. This action is intended to improve the NIAMS budget and program planning process, helping to ensure that applications requesting unusually large commitments of resources are rigorously assessed for consonance with NIAMS priorities.

PROCEDURES

Acceptance of a proposed application must be requested in the format specified at:

<http://www.niams.nih.gov/rtac/funding/grants/Guidelines/guidelines.htm>.

In March and July each year, the NIAMS staff will meet with the NIAMS Director to discuss the potential scientific impact of the proposed applications in the context of the total NIAMS portfolio. Normally, a decision on acceptance will be communicated to the requester at least two months before the anticipated submission date. If the NIAMS agrees to accept assignment of the application for review and potential funding, the staff will notify the Center for Scientific Review before the application is submitted. The Principal Investigator must include a cover letter with the application, identifying the NIAMS program staff member who on behalf of NIAMS, has agreed to accept assignment of the application. Additional information on the NIAMS policy regarding unsolicited applications for investigator-initiated Research, where direct costs are \$500,000 or more per year, may be found at

<http://www.niams.nih.gov/rtac/funding/grants/Guidelines/guidelines.htm>

INQUIRIES

General inquiries related to this notice may be directed to:

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